

Private McBain's Baby



The luckiest survivor of the battle of Malplaquet in 1709 was Master McBain.

During drumbeat, immediately prior to the battle, Private

McBain's wife delivered their baby son, aged three weeks, to him, declaring that she would follow the Colours no more. McBain, having no choice, placed the baby in his knapsack and there he remained throughout the battle.

Miraculously father and son emerged unscathed. *Can you spot the baby in the museum's display?*

Oldest and Youngest

Not only did the Regiment have the youngest participant at Malplaquet, it probably also had the oldest.

William Hiseland, born 1620, had fought in the English Civil War and the Irish Campaign, 1689-91.

He subsequently joined The Royal Regiment and was present at Malplaquet aged eighty-nine years. Married in 1723, aged 103, he died in 1732, aged 112.



From *Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard, A History of The First or The Royal Regiment of Foot The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment) Volume One 1633-1918* by Robert H Paterson.



Depiction of the Battle of the Alma, first battle of the Crimean War on 20th September 1854

The Royal Scots Museum



Moments in Time



September

1 st	1918	Drocourt-Quéant Switch (close to Hindenburg line) - 4 th and 7 th Battalions
3 rd	1709	Tournai surrendered – Earl of Orkney's regiment
	1939	Britain & France declare war on Germany
6 th	1914	Opening of the Battle of the Marne - 2 nd Battalion
8 th	1813	Surrender of San Sebastian after two month's siege – 8 officers and 118 men killed with 15 officers and 310 men wounded during July and August 1813
	1855	Last storming of the Redan, Sevastopol
9 th	1513	James IV killed at the battle of Flodden
	1704	Siege of Landau, Bavaria – captured by 1 st Battalion on 25 th November 1704
11 th	1709	Battle of Malplaquet – 1 st and 2 nd Battalions. See articles 'Private McBain's Baby' and 'Oldest and Youngest'
	1765	John, Marquis of Lorne, becomes Colonel of the Regiment
	1914	13 th Service Battalion formed
13 th	1711	Capture of Bouchain 1 st and 2 nd Battalion
	1914	Battle of the Aisne (Vailly) – 2 nd Battalion
14 th	1854	1 st Battalion arrived in Crimea on SS Oude at Calamita Bay on Crimean Peninsula to capture Russian naval base at Sevastopol - they set sail on 3 rd March
15 th	1746	1 st Battalion sailed from Plymouth for coast of France to destroy Port L'Orient, depot of the East India Company
	1916	Battle of the Somme
18 th	1680	Garrison marched out for Tangier
	1855	Fall of Sevastopol – Russians set fire to the town before withdrawing. Queen Victoria awards the Battle honour 'Sevastopol' which is added to the colours
20 th	1680	Tangier
	1854	First battle of the Alma, Crimea, 1 st Battalion
	1917	Captain H Reynolds MC awarded Victoria Cross – 12 th Battalion
21 st	1746	Attack on L'Orient failed
23 rd	1710	Surrender of Bouchain
25 th	1702	Capture of Venloo
	1915	Hooge – 2 nd Battalion
	1915	Loos – 11 th , 12 th and 13 th Battalions
26 th	1876	Colours presented to the 1 st Battalion by Her Majesty Queen Victoria at Ballater
	1915	Private R Dunsire awarded Victoria Cross. On 30 Sep he wrote: "I can't tell you how I escaped being hit, as I was a good target, running about 100 yards with a man on my back. I was still in the firing line when the Colonel of an East Yorkshire regiment shook hands with me and told me I was a brave lad. I told him anybody would have done the same."
27 th	1810	Battle of Bussaco – 3 rd Battalion
29 th	1918	Breaking of Hindenburg Line – 2 nd , 4 th , 5 th /6 th and 7 th Battalions



The Royal Scots Museum

The Castle, Edinburgh EH1 2YT

museum@theroyalscots.co.uk Charity SCO05163

Battle Honours

Alma – 20th September 1854

At Alma the Russians occupied a strong natural position, following the crest of a range of hills dominating the front of the Alma River. Colonel Bell writes "A battle of Artillery... 2000 guns ...iron hail was showered from each side..."

Few officers had seen any service since the Peninsula war yet the behaviour of all was excellent and after three and a half hours of hard fighting the Russians were in full retreat. Unfortunately we were in no condition to follow up the advantage and the Russians retired into Sevastopol for a long protracted siege, which ended on 20 September 1855.

Busaco – 27th September 1810

At Talavera Wellington realised that he was too weak to cope in the field with the immense forces that France had poured into the Peninsula. His plan of campaign was to wear the enemy down until he had organized the Portuguese and Spanish armies. He retired into Portugal and commenced a systematic defence. By the summer of 1810 Napoleon had 300,000 men in Spain. It was only at the end of September that Wellington, with 50,000 men barred Massena's advance at the Ridge of Bussaco. 4,400 French were killed but the alliance had minimal casualties with only 2 Royal Scots wounded.

Tangier 1680

Tangier passed into Great Britain's hands, together with Bombay, as a portion of the dowry of marriage of Catherine of Braganza on her marriage with Charles II. It was considered of great value at that time, commanding the entrance to the Mediterranean. Immense sums were spent in strengthening the fortifications and in improving the harbour. The hostilities of the Moors, however, increased with time and there began a long series of engagements waged against desperate odds.

In 1684 Tangiers was evacuated, having cost millions in money and many thousands of lives.

Malplaquet – 11th September 1709

A medal was struck by Queen Anne to commemorate this victory but it was only during the reign of Queen Victoria that the regiments were allowed to add the name to their colours.

Of the details of the battle, little is known, except that it was one of the bloodiest ever fought. The Earl of Orkney described it:

'there was such a pelting at one another that I really never saw the like... I really believe had the Foot not been there they would have drove our horse out of the field.'

Although the victors, there is no doubt that our losses were greater than those of the French. The twenty British battalions engaged lost 36 officers, 571 men with 66 officers wounded and 1,281 men wounded.

From *'Battle Honours of The British Army* by C B Norman 1911 and *'Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard'*



The Victoria Cross

Private Robert Dunsire

Born in Buckhaven, Fife in 1891, the family moved to Kirkcaldy where he became a miner. Enlisting in January 1915 he was posted to the 13th Battalion. He was awarded his



Victoria Cross *"For most conspicuous bravery on Hill 70 on 26th September under very heavy fire and rescued a wounded man from between the firing lines. Later, when another man considerably nearer the German lines was heard shouting for help, he crawled out again with utter disregard to the enemy's fire, and carried him in also. Shortly afterwards the Germans attacked over this ground."*

Emerging unscathed from both these rescues, promoted to Corporal, he was mortally wounded in a trench mortar attack whilst in the trenches at Hulluch in the Loos sector on 31st January 1916.

Captain H Reynolds MC

Born in Northamptonshire, commissioned into the 14th (Reserve Battalion) he was posted to France in August 1916. Awarded the Military Cross for a series of actions



on 12th April 1917 which meant being under artillery machine-gun and rifle fire for a considerable time. The Victoria Cross was awarded for actions on 20th September 1917 and the citation reads: *"Henry Reynolds MC, Temporary Captain, 12th Battalion Royal Scots. For most conspicuous bravery when his company, in attack and approaching their final objective,*

suffered heavy casualties from enemy machine guns and from an enemy 'pill-box' which had been passed by the first wave. Captain Reynolds reorganised his men who were scattered, and then proceeded alone by rushes from shell-hole to shell-hole, all the time being under heavy machine-gun fire. When near the 'pill-box' he threw a grenade, intending that it should go inside but the enemy had blocked the entrance. He then crawled to the entrance and forced a phosphorous grenade inside. This set the place on fire and caused the death of three of the enemy, while the remainder, seven or eight, surrendered with two machine guns. Afterwards, though wounded, he continued to lead his company against another objective, and captured it, taking seventy prisoners and two more machine guns. During the whole attack the company was under heavy machine-gun fire from the flanks, but, despite this, Capt Reynolds kept complete control of his men."

Captain Reynolds died in Surrey on 26th March 1948. From *'Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard'* by Robert Paterson

A snippet from The Thistle, the Regimental Journal January 1930, p 292.

Beeton, in his "Our Soldiers and the V.C.," tells the following story of an old Royal:-

"The writer of this chapter once knew an old Devonshire pensioner, John Scully by name, who belonged to the 'Fust Ryuls,' as he used to style his old regiment, who had fought in almost every one of the principal battles of the Peninsular War, and had escaped without a scratch.

'John,' I would sometimes say to the old fellow, as he stood leaning on his spade, 'what regiment did you belong to?'

'Why, Sponshus Pilut's Guards, to be sure,' he would curtly reply. 'I've told 'ee so often enough, I reckon.'

'No, I think not. But Pontius Pilate's Guards - what a queer title! Why in the world were you called so?'

'Why, you see, the Regiment was raised in Sponshus Pilut's time, and that's how us got the name.'

And this he implicitly believed."